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Via ECFS
Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

**Re: In the Matter of Petition of USTelecom for Forbearance Pursuant to
47 U.S.C. Section 160(c); WC Docket No. 18-141; Category 1**

Dear FCC,

The Public Switched Telephone Network regulated by the FCC was developed with private capital but public (via the FCC) protection of profitability, hence zero risk to investors. Private investors have been, and still are, handsomely compensated for building the system and operating it.

It remains the most cost-effective and reliable communications service in the country, as essential to daily life as running water, electricity and the Interstate Highway system.

Please do not permit its hijacking by commercial interests, who will be free to engage in "extortionate upgrades" to coerce subscribers to buy more expensive and less reliable services they do not need or want.

An open communications network, with evenhanded access for all, was a primary intent of the FCC. Please do not abdicate that goal. It is costly in money, time and stress to change a communications provider, leaving unregulated services subject to incremental cost increases presented as "improvements" which do the subscriber no good.

The imbalance in power between service providers and subscribers, and the subscriber's absolute dependence on the provider, make it imperative that the FCC act as a referee to prevent rapacious behavior by telecoms providers.

Thanks for reading,

Bob Prohaska